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Science Notes - Book News : *Did the Devil Make Darwin Do It? Modern Perspectives on the Creation-Evolution Controversy*

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SCIENCE NOTES

Book News

Did the Devil Make Darwin Do It? Modern Perspectives on the Creation-Evolution Controversy, recently published by the Iowa State University Press, provides discussions from scientists and philosophers in many areas on this topic now under examination across the country.

It is edited by David B. Wilson, a science historian at Iowa State University, whose interest was sparked by a creationist confrontation in a biology classroom at Iowa State in 1978.

Assisted by Warren D. Dolphin, Wilson has collected essays from biologists, geologists, an anthropologist, an astronomer, a philosopher of science, a biblical scholar and clergymen to present a multi-faceted study of the scientific basis for the evolutionary theory.

Part One of *Did the Devil Make Darwin Do It?* sets the stage in "The Nature of the Controversy" for later, more involved discussions on scientific evidence for evolution. Essays by a historian of science, a biologist, and a philosopher of science explore the general issues involved with the problem and prepare the reader for the more precise studies later on in the book.

In "The Realm of Science," essays explore the evolution of the universe as well as the role of rock formations, fossils of animal and human remains found throughout the world as documents reinforcing the evolution theory.

Scientists examine creationist claims in each area and show how these claims do not stand up against well-established evidence to the contrary, and present an overview of modern scientific knowledge in their particular fields of study.

In "The Realm of Religion," theologians focus upon the dispute within Christianity, showing how the Genesis story of the Creation can more readily be studied for a religious meaning rather than a literal one. Authors demonstrate that the current controversy is in large part a continuation of a long-running dispute between proponents of different versions of Christianity.

The place of the liberal church in today's society is addressed. Surrounded by growing scepticism and apathy on the one hand and a rising fundamentalism on the other, the liberal church occupies a shrinking middle ground, which, the authors argue, should be expanded.

The final section in *Did the Devil Make Darwin Do It?* grapples with creationism in public education. The history of past difficulties regarding religious teaching in the schools is examined, as is the current legal position especially as it relates to creationism. Authors focus on the struggle over creationism in the school system in Iowa in recent years. They trace the efforts made in Iowa to counter creationists' legislative activities and show the kinds of activities that the scientific, educational, legislative, and lay public may expect from creationists in the future and suggest mechanisms for addressing such tactics.

The essays in *Did the Devil Make Darwin Do It?* are written to present a candid account of several scientific and scholarly fields bearing on the creation-evolution controversy. The authors attempt to explain what in each field is well established, what is merely speculative, and what it totally unknown.